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Senate

The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JIM DEMINT, a Senator from the State of South Carolina.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray:

O God of mercies, You preserve the seas and all that is in them. You have promised to keep in perfect peace those whose minds are fixed on You.

Give our Senators today the serenity that comes through trusting in Your strength. As they do the work of freedom, may they seek Your guidance and wisdom. Lead them with Your precepts to the decisions that will honor Your name. Give your peace and unity to their hearts so that harmony can be seen in their interactions. Shine Your light within them so that they can serve humanity well.

Help us all to humble ourselves under Your mighty hand, that You may exalt us in due time. We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JIM DEMINT led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 25, 2006.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable JIM DEMINT, a Senator from the State of South Carolina, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. DEMINT thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today, we will start with a 1-hour period of morning business, and following that we will go into executive session to consider the nomination of Gray Miller to be a U.S. district judge for the Southern District of Texas. We have 10 minutes allocated for debate on that nomination, with the vote occurring after that time.

Senators can expect the first vote today at approximately 11 o'clock this morning. We have a group of Senators going to the White House. Therefore, we want to start that vote no later than 11 o'clock. I hope Members will be able to keep their remarks brief so we can get to that vote.

After the vote, we will resume consideration of the supplemental appropriations bill. There is an opportunity for Senators to give opening statements this morning prior to the policy lunch. The Senate will recess for each party's policy meeting between 12:30 and 2:15. Later this afternoon, I expect amendments to be offered to the supplemental, and I hope we will be voting on those amendments during today's session.

FOCUSING ON THE CHALLENGES FACING AMERICA

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I welcome my colleagues back from the Easter/

Passover recess. It was a 2-week recess, where many had the opportunity to spend time with our families and with our constituents back at home. I hope everybody had a rejuvenating and productive period of time because we have a lot to do.

We have before us a 5-week block of time, during which I intend to keep the Senate focused on the big challenges facing America and on delivering meaningful solutions to the problems Americans are seeing out there every day, some of which are very apparent and some of which are not very apparent in their everyday lives.

As we set out from the very start, the goal of this Republican-led Senate is to make America safer, stronger, more productive, and healthier. That applies across the board, from the war on terror abroad—and we will have a lot of discussion on that on the supplemental—to the family budget right here at home, and people are feeling the pinch of gasoline prices and skyrocketing health care costs every day.

Time is of the essence. We have serious issues to tackle in 5 short weeks. That means working together, pulling the very best out of both sides of the aisle, and recognizing that obstruction is not in order as we proceed along this upward path of producing for the American people.

It is an election year. That always makes it challenging for everything we do every step along the way. But the American people expect us to legislate, to govern, and not to get mired down in partisan obstruction and partisan politics. It is our obligation and responsibility to deliver to them. We have the challenges out there. We have to act and we need to act with solutions. That is what the American people expect—challenge, action, solutions. That is what they deserve.

We need to support our troops who are fighting in the field for our freedom and safety. We need to address the skyrocketing health care costs and make

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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